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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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SUBJECT: Tomatoes....Information from the garden specialists of the United States
Department of Agriculture

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If you had to pick the American gardener's favorite vegetable...what would you choose? Well....in a poll taken last year...tomatoes topped all the other vegetables by a large percent. Almost every garden boasted of atleast a few tomato plants.

And that's not really surprising. Because tomatoes grow well in almost every part of the country. They make excellent eating fresh...and they're good for canning too. You don't have to have a pressure canner to put them up safely.

If you're planning to grow tomatoes this year, maybe you'd like these tips on how to grow them. The tips come from the garden specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

In the first place...remember tomatoes take sunshine. They grow rank and are not likely to produce much fruit in the shade. They need water during a dry spell. so keep that in mind too when you choose a place to put them out.

If you get your plants instead of growing them...get a wilt-resistant, hardy variety.

Too much nitrogenous fertilizer or manure will also make them grow fast and rangy...without producing enough fruit. A handful of complete fertilizer well mixed with the soil when you set each plant out should provide it with all the food it needs.

Whether 'tis better to stake the plants...or to leave them sprawling over the garden depends on the amount of land you have to use. If yours is a small garden...you'll probably want to tie the plants up. You can get twice as many staked tomato plants in a given space than unstaked ones. Staked tomato plants should be put about 2 feet apart. Tie them with strips of rags or soft twine. And tie them loosely.

Give those tomatoes a good start, and with just a little care during the rest of the season, they'll repay you over and over for your trouble.

